

FOR the first time since overpowering Slough in their 1968 thriller, Wycombe Wanderers are through to a Berks and Bucks Senior Cup final.

But, with bigger fish to fry in their Isthmian League Amateur Cup double bid, Wycombe can be forgiven if their thoughts wander from the Allied Counties' big day, when Chesham, Slough or holders Maidenhead will provide the opposition.

The unfortunate supporters who witnessed Saturday's semi-final at Loakes Park, however, must welcome any excuse to look forward, rather than back on this tediously disjointed 90 minutes.

To put it generously, the game missed a lot — Wanderers' normal fluidity and Town's faith in their ability to upset the odds, most particularly.

There was one oasis in the desert though. Wycombe's ingenious forward line kept excitement level reasonably high.

That Wokingham weren't run out of the Cup by half time is a tribute to the unyielding display

By MIKE WHITESMAN

by their 'sweeper', Gary Titterton, who recently made a tenacious debut for the Berks and Bucks F.A.

Already watched by Norwich City scouts, Titterton is attracting widespread interest and did nothing to tarnish his growing image on Saturday.

As Wanderers penned his colleagues back, he patrolled magnificently across field to interrupt numerous promising raids.

But two goals barely rewarded the Wycombe forwards' complete domination. Wokingham, badly disrupted by injuries and crying out for the influence of absent midfield star Barry Gaynor, fielded their weakest line-up of the season. It showed.

Although resting several topline players, Wycombe compiled a strong side on paper, and included skipper John Delaney, who had earlier been given small hope of offsetting a shin injury.

The Blues' thinking in defence was nonetheless tired compared with that of their frontrunners, all of whom knew a few too many tricks for the

slow visiting backrow, Titterton excluded.

Profiting from the support of Barry Baker, Wycombe were difficult to restrain once a raid had been set up. And within minutes, both Ray Brandon and Keith Tollervey had been talked to by referee Christopher.

Goalkeeper Ian Bath, deputising for Town's first choice, Brian Callington, made enough errors to encourage his opponents to shoot on sight.

Accordingly, Paul Fuschillo, now an official 'cap' after his England debut against France last Wednesday, tested him by punting a high ball into the area after 16 minutes. Bath dropped it first time round before retrieving the situation.

Sixty seconds later, the 'keeper could take a fair share of the blame as Wanderers broke through.

He dived forward, but lost sight of Baker's shot and could only body it away. The reprieve lasted less than a second with Keith Searle crashing the return into goal.

The Wokingham defence often resorted to physical tactics which Mr. Christopher was quick to check.

Wycombe Wanderers 2, Wokingham Town

On 24 minutes, Brandon, a tough, balding full-back in his first season with the Athenians, won himself a deserved booking after chopping down Geoff Anthony in one of the worst fouls seen at Loakes Park for months.

Luckily, the Welshman escaped serious injury and continued to play a highly spirited part as Wycombe created frequent chances.

Searle and Larry Pritchard slipped in and out of the visitors' defensive cover almost at will, while Bernie Bremer and Hutchinson both commanded close watching.

In return, forlorn long-range shots were used to keep Kevin O'Brien in business.

Bath, if suspect at times, also enjoyed a degree of success, palming Hutchinson's attempt for a corner, and coolly judging one of Delaney's special headers.

At the interval, Wycombe still led by Searle's goal, but deserved more despite the scrappy spectacle unfolding before over 2,500 fans.

Wokingham, on this performance, had less to offer than little Didcot, Wycombe's victims in the last round.

Their only real threat, centre-forward Mike Nicks, spent five minutes off field after being carried off when hurt in a 52nd minute collision inside the Isthmians' area.

Titterton popped up more times than a jack-in-the-box during the afternoon. After 59 minutes, he intervened as Searle sent over a potentially dangerous cross to Hutchinson.

It was virtually all Wycombe, but Town retained a mathematical hope, as substitute Colin Travis took over from Fred Lucas, who alone remains from the Wokingham squad which dealt a shock k.o. to Wanderers three seasons ago.

In between times, Wokingham made motions in vain search of an equaliser, but the minutes were otherwise employed in fending off Wanderers' continuing pressure.

Twice, when Bernie Bremer (after 83 minutes) and then Anthony (a minute later), went down after entering the visitors' area Wycombe fruitlessly appealed for a penalty.

Not until the match seconds away from injury did Wycombe double-seal appearance in the Cockcroft again played 'bad to upend Searle and conce penalty.

Seven days earlier, Del had wasted what might been a vital spot-kick in Amateur Cup clash Oldbury.

This time though, he left room for error, driving the waist high into the back net while Bath gambled on the wrong way.

WYCOMBE WANDERERS:
O'Brien; P. Fuschillo, C. Gali Faulkner, J. Delaney, B. Baker, Anthony, B. Bremer, K. Searle, Pritchard, J. Hutchinson. Sul MacLean (not used).

WOKINGHAM TOWN: I. Bath, Jeffries, R. Brandon, G. Titterton, K. Tollervey, F. Quraishi, J. Coc, T. Chivers, M. Nicks, P. Wals Lucas (sub. C. Travis, 68 mins).
Referee: Mr. J. A. Christ (Harwell).

Official attendance: 2,770.
Half-time: 1-0. Goal scorers: Wycombe—Searle (17), Delaney (pen.).